family. Babies lacking in merit died at their birth, just as mothers whose merit had run low suffered or died in childbirth.

A soul desiring rebirth flew into the womb of a woman at conception. By care and imitative magical practices, both parents helped the fetus grow but the mother gave the baby its body. Parturition was a joint effort of mother and child, the course and outcome of which was determined by their respective stores of merit. After delivery the child was blessed, his soul seized and tied in, and ritual means taken that he not wander from home throughout life. A post-partum rest of several days was taken beside a hot fire, the purpose of which was both physiological, i.e. to dry the uterus, and ritual, to bring about full "ripe" adulthood.

The fire, which was consecrated, strengthened a woman and made her a better nourisher, mature, more compassionate, and eligible to handle magic and the tender souls of living creatures. Thus she was fitted for her life-calling as a woman. The comparable ceremony of maturation for men, when they too were changed from "raw" to mature, compassionate, and strong males for their calling of fatherhood and leadership, was ordination into the Buddhist priesthood. Only those men and women who had undergone their respective rites of maturation were eligible to handle magic. Men's magic gave power, control and could be aggressive. Women's magic was limited to nurturing purposes, and could never be destructive. The respective areas of magical competence and right were autonomous and rigidly separated on pain of severe sanctions.

This view of the role of women in life and the events of childbirth in the earthly and cosmic scene, had the effect of giving women in childbirth a positive, secure, and relaxed outlook, and an understanding and acceptance of suffering so that they had little fear.

How careers in midwifery, whether professional or amateur were established, and the nature of the specialty and of a practice are discussed.

The understanding of, and the attitudes toward, modern medicine are given along with findings accounting for acceptance or rejection of modern hospital care for parturients. Accepting the changes that were observed in the practices surrounding childbirth proved to be a means of expressing partial withdrawal from the old life of a farmer and a step towards the glitter of urban ways. In the desire to be seen as progressive, the fire rest had been shortened, market products substituted for the consecrated fire, and other urban ways introduced.

For persons interested in introducing changes in the

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775 Man was higher on the scale than woman.[20] Progress toward
[562] Nippan was not assured but had to be earned. With sinful behavior a person might be catapulted back to being a beast. He who stole would "be born and die 500 times before he could even grow up." Almost everyone had to be sent to purgatory
[776] where demons carried on tortures until he had suffered enough to be released for rebirth. The evil spirits (phī) that wandered frighteningly in Bang Chan were part of the legions whose job was to increase deserved suffering on this earth.

771 The people of Bang Chan felt they could discern even
782 of themselves who was meritful and who was not according to
828 human circumstances, constitution, and behavior. A meritorious person was healthy, happy, and successful in all undertakings. He enjoyed good health and long life, a kindly personality, many fine children, wealth, high status, intelligence, and luck. Astrologically, he was born on a day
[775] of good confluences, of gold and auspicious signs. He who lacked merit, because of sins committed perhaps many ages ago, was born on an unfortunate day. He suffered early death, deformities, unhappiness, poverty, and had a cruel nature.
[763] Illness, whether supernatural or natural, whether induced by wind or sorcery or what, struck as part of the suffering brought on by former sin. It was accepted in the conviction that whoever suffered had brought it on himself. When merit ran out, or when sin cancelled out and then exceeded one's merit, suffering and premature death occurred, despite all human efforts. Because of the prevalence of illness and of life's difficulties, major and minor, no one, no matter how outwardly fortunate and so evidently meritorious, had at this earthly level of existence enough merit to escape some suffering and frustration. By the same token, though, no person was without hope. By making merit or by suffering in this life, existence would be happier in the next. The making of merit was in the forefront of daily conscious effort and even conversations of the people of Bang Chan.

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784 The long-range protection against all illness was to
[577] live virtuously and make merit. However, to guard against temporary supernatural intrusions, everyone possessed and
[782] usually wore Buddha lockets and other amulets. Some
[304] underwent tatooing, men having Cambodian or other figures, women, 2 small dots tatooed on the torso under the arm.

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20. Men had achieved greater "other-worldliness" while women were more bound by the phenomena of the flesh (cf. Kirsch, 1961).

846 789 372 [753] [755]

Even after the child was out, the pile of wood was still a drying womb to be treated carefully. It was also the wood for a consecrated fire. To drop a piece of this wood carelessly both injured and desecrated. If this happened a disease of the eyes "ʔaang," came at once for which no male medical powers had any remedy. The only cure was in women's hands, that essence of maternity, "a drop of mother's milk--any mother's." The larger implications of this linking of fire and maternity are dealt with in the next section.

The Fire of Maturity

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In the events surrounding the birth of the child, the significant step for the woman personally was the post-partum rest period by the fire (yū fai). Far more was at stake than just drying the uterus. The fire rest was one of the series of rites of the life-cycle which marked the course of an individual from birth to death. The others were the cutting of the umbilical cord, first head shaving, top-knot tonsure, ordination (for men), marriage, and cremation. Through the consecrated fire a woman formally achieved full maturity: she became suk (cooked, ripe, mature). Maturity did not come just by bearing a child. The fire brought about the transformation.[46] [885]

562 • [774]

How was mature womanhood viewed? What was the essential female role and office? Bang Chan saw a woman as one who "feeds and lengthens lives." As the custodian of growth she was, first, the guardian of the vital, essential khwan soul, and especially of the immature, flighty khwan of growing persons.

[827]

Secondly, a woman was a donor of nourishment (liiang).[47] Her primary responsibility was to nurture children and other tender beings. She nourished the fetus with her blood. After

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46. "The fiery element digests what is eaten or drunk...and cooks the body and gives it its beauty of complexion. And the body thus cooked is kept free from decay" (Warren:157-158).

47. All the deities "concerned with the welfare of our bodies and our khwan" were maternal (Mae), e.g. Rice, Water, Earth, "Mother-Goddess" (Mae Sii), and several Mother-Princesses (Chao Mae). Fire, and maybe wind, were both female (mae) and male (phra) (Textor:485). To these deities, "higher" than ordinary spirits, Bang Chan "owed more." [776]

562 [827] [853] delivery, "her blood was purified to a white color to become the milk of the breast."[48] Nursing a child was the essence of a woman's function, the supremely feminine act. A priest said, "A mother mercifully receives the khwan into her womb, and for maintaining life gives more of her own body, strength, and care (i.e. than does the father). Mothers are born to love children. Theirs is a steady intent to provide children with successful existences. To a mother one is most grateful" (S.S.).

562 462 252 264 In a wider context, not only all their household members but people anywhere were the objects of women's nurture: women were in charge of the cooking even if occasionally helped by men. At the meals they prepared they were often the last to eat, so often "holding back and eating whatever was left over," that in a poor household, short rationing daily was probable (Hauck, et al.:35,49). One old lady expressed deep satisfaction that she "did not feel hungry any more." She construed this as proof that she had ample merit, but it also meant that she was a great donor who gave continuously and took little. Women usually offered the early morning food to priests in behalf of the family, and they took charge of cooking the immense amount of food served at large ceremonies and temple festivities. When age pushed women past their mature capacities, they returned to the status of recipients. A son said of his senile mother, "She has gone back to being a child" (klap pai pen dek). The son's wife cooked delicacies for her.

[182] [431] [796]

562 857 [291] [593] A desire to give tender care and nourishment was deemed inborn in all women. Although sex was not strongly differentiated in babyhood,[49] by age 3 a hard-to-handle skirt was put on a tiny girl, who reacted with vast pride. By 5, girls were helping with cooking and baby tending. Often has an older sister of 9 or 12 been observed patiently feeding her charge the ice cream she longed to eat herself.

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[822] 48. This very phrase was congruent with the colors associated with the khwan. Red or white flags, or pieces of cloth, or puddings (khanom) were required wherever khwan were involved, such as in rice, san phra phūm, and tham khwan ceremonies. Red was an auspicious color, white symbolized innocence and purity.

[856] 49. Anuman Rajadhon reports, though, that at the moment of birth, the child's sex was immediately "adjusted" (Anuman Rajadhon:127).

Only when the youngster was satiated did she gobble the remainder.[50] Parents often commented that girls in general were obedient and good, but boys were not. Everyone spoke, however, of exceptions. The capacity to play the female role grew with the child. It was not completed with the physiological maturity of first menstruation but only with ritual maturity.

The rituals to fit a woman for her office, described as "directly related to the welfare of the child," had 4 specific purposes. They perfected her as a compassionate being; restored and strengthened her body; improved her capacities as a nourisher; and strengthened her own khwan. The key to each of these aims was the holy fire.[51] Because actions taken by the fire were immediately and permanently effective, every effort was made to induce auspicious happenings. Words spoken by the fire had compelling effect so even ordinary speech became magical. Speaking of the fire's hotness so raised its heat that a mother was burned. For this reason, uninformed or careless visitors like children or foreigners were a danger.

According to Buddhist thinking, suffering developed compassion. Through the discomfort of pregnancy, followed by the anguish of childbirth and the heat of the fire, a woman became compassionate and so achieved the guide-line for moral behavior. Then a woman was sure to be touched with pity for the younger or less fortunate. One teacher despite the inconvenience went home twice a day from school to nurse her new baby because she "pitied" him too much to hire a wet-nurse. It was "pitiful" to see a child at another woman's breast for it implied that its mother was either unwilling or unable to nurse it. Thus, babies were rarely nursed by others than their own mothers.

The fire also strengthened a woman by ridding her of bad blood and foul fluids. Wind and Fire, the 2 spirit guardians of the elements necessary to the occasion, were invoked to assist in the drying of the uterus. In addition, strengthening

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50. Boys too fed their younger siblings but their purpose was a power-play: "to assure obedience in the future" (cf. Hanks and Phillips:648).

51. This fire was kept entirely separate from the one for cooking and boiling of water. It was ritually lit and ritually extinguished at the end of the fire-rest.

562 774

Thus she performed several rites involving the maintenance of the immature khwan of children and of rice.[54]

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The acme of maternal virtues was manifested in the "good nourishers" (lĭang dī). These women had borne many children who "nursed and slept well, did not cry, and easily established good habits." They were lĭang dī not just because of the time spent by the fire, for that time could be matched by persons who had lost babies. They were special persons of more than usual capacities for success in nurture. Good to have around for their auspicious influence, they were called upon to inaugurate or help processes concerned with health and growth. They performed, or caught the child in the winnowing ceremony, or gave babies their first suck. They were the persons to whom a sickly child was brought so that his health might be improved by calling the soul and tying holy cord at wrist and ankle (ria khwan). [755] [774]

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562 774 789

54. If a child indicated by continuous crying that he had lost his khwan, a mature (suk) woman had to be asked to call it back ritually and re-tie it into the body with sacred cord at wrist and ankle. There was no special magic. Her words suffice. Khwan-ladling, a more elaborate and compelling form of the same ceremony, used magical formulae (Textor:401-402). One of Phillips' sentence-completion tests was, "If one is frightened, the best thing to do is..." Of the respondents, 7 women, including one Muslim, would set to work to "call back the khwan" (Phillips:267-268). No man suggested the latter.

562 243 789

In the agricultural rites, women handled the rice's khwan in basically the same way when it was immature: inviting the young Rice Goddess to stay and grow in the field, and transporting to the house the child-like seed that only next year would grow to maturity. For these rites a woman used an incantation if she knew one. That she could also handle the rice khwan by speaking "extemporaneously" (Textor:429), indicated that her mere words were enough. If no one else were available, a non-suk woman could call the khwan of a child or of the Rice Mother by reason of her in-born female potency, but could not "ladle" a khwan.

562 774 856 [243]

When the khwan was mature (after a person was about age 10) men took over its care. In the men's thaw khwan (khwan-strengthening) rite, here, too, women were the ones to carry off the cloth-and-leaf covering of the baisī (tiered offering) into which the khwan had flitted during the ceremony. The rice-ceremony at the threshing floor was a thaw khwan, so was performed by men.

562 156 (riak khwan). Theirs was an augmented personal potency[55] in nurture not unlike the mana so widespread in the Asian-Pacific area.[56] The best midwives were liang dī, though not all liang dī were midwives. This societal peak was not an unattainable ideal. In the community, certain women were pointed out as liang dī and some of them recognized in themselves the validity of this title. [159]

562 794 796 262 The association of rice, motherhood, and khwan now stands clear. Rice made auk by cooking over a fire, was the essential food not only for the body but for the khwan. Growth and life depended on the nourished khwan. Rice came from a maternal figure, the Rice Goddess, Mae Phosop (cf. J.R. Hanks, 1960). Human mothers, too, when made auk, gave auk nourishment: the milk of the breast was merely transformed rice. Whenever rice was eaten throughout human adulthood, the Rice Mother continued her nourishment, for in each grain was a bit of her khwan, nourishing to the human khwan. The rice-bowl and ladle, used in many a ceremony, stood for the maternal care given a human khwan, and by extension, personal care throughout life. Whenever the rice bowl with offerings (khwan khao: soul-[of]-rice) was presented by a parturient or by a sick person, loving care comparable to maternal care was being requested. [782]

182 885 846 562 372 The idea of re-birth, of a fresh start within the pure area encircled by the holy cord, with auspicious words and consecrated fire, was deep in every life-cycle rite. The particular circumstance of the fire of parturition was a forthright cooking to bring out and increase a woman's essential femaleness, to transform her from a youthful, partial giver into a complete, mature donor of nourishment. Such was the satisfaction of women in this female role that many said they would like to be reborn as women. Few wanted

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55. Anuman Rajadhon (p. 134) reports that in India a newborn girl needed no ritual paraphernalia to keep away spirits because "her sex...is a protection in itself, and spirits cannot come to bother her." This was close to Bang Chan's idea of female potency.

56. Cf. "Mana" (E.R.E. VIII:375) for a quick run-down on a definition of mana.

1: Hanks E-5 (1953-1954) 1964 AO7 Central Thai AO7

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to be reborn as men. All women were eager to undergo the post-partum fire at least once. After that modifications might be entertained.[57] Whether the baby lived or died was not pertinent, for the benefits of the fire were for the mother.

Comparison of Male and Female Maturation Rites

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The parallel ritual that fitted men to perform their masculine role was ordination into the Buddhist priesthood. The well-documented Buddhist ends should not be permitted to eclipse this other personal goal. Just as the fire prepared a woman for motherhood, so ordination changed an immature youth into a man ready for marriage and fatherhood. He too was transformed from raw (dip) to ripe (suk). Men gained compassion through denial and suffering. Since their natures were seen as hard (khaeng), strong, bent on gain, influence, and power, possibly destructive and concupiscent, the severest deprivations were invoked: the renouncement of the gratifications of sex and food. Of the 2, the deprivation of food involved the greatest break with previous habits, for since babyhood, food had been a symbol of maternal care. Hence, a man was cast on his own. His only refuge and support was the Buddha, the law, and the Brotherhood. This self-denial induced the suffering that, coupled with knowledge gained from study of the scriptures, led to compassion. The suffering in no way

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57. The fire-rest though desirable was not obligatory. In 1865, Bradley said it could be "dispensed with in times of civil commotion, for fear of the enemy" and "no damages whatever were suffered whatever to mother or child" (p.79). Like other life cycle rites it was postponed if not convenient (saduak). Also in times of peace, "a few mothers here and there cannot lie by the fire," and a few say, "they will not" (ibid:p.79). Bang Chan would accept this viewpoint freely as reflecting an individual, constitutional set of elements, or as an autonomous decision of an individual. The woman would never feel herself as competent as a ritually mature person though.

885 deprived a man of his masculine strength but was expected to
793 change him into a kind and merciful being.[58] It took at least
562 a three month season (phansā) in the priesthood to make a man
785 mature, responsible, and effective. That this moral fitness
[778] was not obtained overnight was given vivid illustration: if a
789 Buddha Amulet, designed for invulnerability, failed to be effec-
885 tive when tested by having a gun fired at it, it was "sometimes jokingly dismissed as a monk (phra) who has just been ordained (buat mai)" (Textor:529). This interesting episode illuminates one other important result achieved by both men and women in their respective maturation rites: authorization to handle magic.

Magic and Maturity

In Bang Chan, magic was powerful. Whatever the purpose, whether beneficial or nefarious, it was effective if all conditions were met. Lest such power fall into unscrupulous hands, the community limited its availability and use to those who had gained the moral qualities and fitness to handle it wisely. Only the ritually mature could be counted on to be compassionate, strong, responsible adults, and so were permitted access to occult powers. Whether by ordination or the fire-rest, to be suk was an absolute prerequisite to magical knowledge. It did not give magical power, but qualified one to seek it out. Since no career in medicine was possible without magic, no man could be a mō who had not been previously ordained.

789 The uses of magic by men had entirely different objectives
562 from those of women. Their respective fields did not

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58. "A monk was changed...to be meek and mild." By seeking his morning alms he "show(s) mercy towards creatures" (prōt sat) (Anuman Rajadhon:76-77). Women's tenderness in their maternal function was not associated with shyness. A compassionate woman with a strong winyān soul (which projected the quality of the heart) was enterprising and effective (cf. J.R. Hanks, 1959). Where sexual characteristics were confused, instability in behavior appeared. The cultural expectation was that children and women were delicate (ōn), older people and men were hard (khaeng). "A male who is easily induced to convulse is one who had a 'soft' heart (čhai ōn). ...and also a 'soft' khwan (khwan ōn).....Such a young man is excitable rather than predictable and dependable, and hence is cause for parental anxiety" (Textor:405).

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overlap at all. Magic was wielded by men to gain power over spirits, persons, elements, and forces. It had either social or personal benefits. The role of highest social benefit, corresponding to the liang dī in women, was the khwan-specialist (mǭ khwan) who conducted the life-cycle, khwan-strengthening (thām khwan) (for persons and for the rice) and many other ceremonies for the mature khwan. This role demanded men of the highest qualifications in probity, erudition, and personal dedication. Men also had the formulae for curing, house- or boat-blessing, invoking guardian spirits (sān phrs phūm), etc. Men could make protective amulets to render the wearers safe from bullets, knives, spirits, and all sorts of hostile forces in the world. [791] [156]

On the other hand men's magical objectives could be aggressive and hostile. The gamut of amulets, missiles, love-oil, and incantations (Textor:passim) showed the potential for attack and why the converse need for invulnerability was so strong. Men had a nurturing (liāng) role, but only for non-human beings, e.g. buffalo, pet birds, and guardian spirits of house and land. Subverting this role for hostile ends, they obtained possession of the ghost of a recent corpse by gathering the drop of oil at the chin, and nourishing it (liang) for use in sorcery. For a man, nourishing something gave control. [754]

All of the powers of men's magic were available to women on request for any purpose, hostile or not, but the "owner" had to be the mediating agent. [424]

A woman's magical knowledge was linked exclusively to her female task. It did not give power over people. It could not be destructive. No female sorceress existed in Bang Chan. No woman feared the magic of another woman in childbirth nor at any time. A woman's magic was devoted solely to promoting the processes of growth and life. Thus it controlled the searing heat of the fire, invoked the Spirits of the 4 elements, and helped at various points in childbirth. It handled the soul of the Rice Goddess and of Mother Sū, guardian of children. It restored any frail and wandering khwan to its proper bodily abode. Such was a woman's magic. [754]

To insure separateness the respective provinces of magical activity were ringed with sanctions. Contact with a woman's skirt, undergarments, or menstrual blood completely negated any of a man's protective amulets (re tattooing, cf. Textor: 102). Though this reflected the traditional avoidance between sexual phenomena and Buddhism, it might also indicate a tacit moral evaluation of the magical powers of men and women: the powers for growth were ultimately ascendant over those for power, for men had nothing that undid a woman's powers. Though women were easily prey to men's magical control, as by [841] [834] [754]

562 789 [754] [787] love philters, and they might be "sealed up" in childbirth or attacked by khun, their capacities to "liang" were inalienable. If any woman tried to tamper with men's magic, a severe sanction fell on her. She became the host of the phī krasŭ who lived from faeces like a dog.[59] On the other hand in a legendary case a man who tried to perform one of the women's rites to the Rice Mother was destroyed.[60] Furthermore, the Buddhist sanction of sinfulness fell on any man using magic for evil purposes.

562 791 [755] The single channel where women might operate in the men's field of curing, power, clairvoyance, etc. was as a medium (khon song), through possession by a spirit. If possessed by a male mō, she could do everything a mō could do. Men were never mediums. Bang Chan's only medium was possessed by a male mō.[61] During seances she talked and sat like a man, and gave out cures and advice to an eager clientele. Only while wearing the yellow robe of an ordained priest did a man enjoy a generalized eufunction comparable to a woman's nurturing capacity. His powers in many respects were far greater than hers, but limited in her speical province.

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[156] [688] [626] [593] 59. My finding is based on Textor's interesting facts (pp. 305-330). He described the hosts of phī krasŭ as married women ("never a maiden") in their 30's or 40's, who were "invariably" trying to learn love magic. Such women were, however, violating their sexual function as nurturant and worse, their status as "auk" women, ritually established by the holy fire! Ostracism by the community, implemented by fear of contagion through spittle, lasted even unto the deathbed. The phī krasŭ's daughter alone was immune while giving the devoted care which was every mother's due in her old age, for Bang Chan desired no alienation of this filial duty even out of fear of the terrible sanction on the mother.

[539] [776] 60. The legend ran that once a man instead of a woman went into the rice field to perform the ritual inviting of the Rice Goddess to stay there and be cared for with food and offerings during her pregnancy. The goddess he met was not an immature and tender child-like spirit, but the adult, pregnant being who was powerful, flirtatious, and frightening. Dazzled by her beauty he fell in love with her, and ran away with her, vanishing forever. The goddess, affronted because an improper person arrived to deal with her, destroyed him.

[825] [787] 61. In Bangkok, monkey, cats, or spirits may also possess women.

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The medium's powers as a หมอ appeared to be entirely equivalent to a man's.

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To summarize, the fire-rest enabled a woman to acquire fruitful habits, new status, and the right to handle magic. The implications of the ritual clarified the role of women and the associated symbolism of rice, and by contrast the role of men. The nature of the magical resources available to each sex laid the groundwork for a career in midwifery for women, and for men, a career as a หมอ.

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Comparison of the respective rites of maturation points up certain contrasts and parallels between men and women. Women achieved compassion and maturity through their sexual role, while men achieved these qualities by denying their masculinity. Even a bounty of merit, which a man achieved directly by ordination, came to a woman through procreation, by the ordination of a son, or as a wife if her husband were ordained. Many activities were done by either sex, but each had certain exclusive proprietary areas. If women were donors of nourishment, men too had their donor roles, sexual, economic, religious, etc. Each paralleled the other in the formal steps to maturity, building the way for a complementary social and marital partnership for which both were ritually and psychologically well prepared.[62]

62. In contrast, note the psychological ill-preparedness, leading to severe tensions in Ceylon (Oberesekere, passim).

759 In these 2 qualifications of skill and success, some of the explicitly non-professional old ladies were recognized as easily matching the professionals. What then was the definition of a professional midwife?

759 789 What the professional midwives alone did was to deliver non-kin, for which they had to have magical formulae and reliable celestial knowledge. The incantations gave a midwife the right to be called a mɔ̄ tamyā, for he or she was using to a greater or lesser extent the sacred wisdom of occultism (saivasāt). Here midwifery was like any other craft or endeavor. One could cure, sing, and build a boat without magic, but with it, the chances of success and effectiveness were increased. The incantations could "ease delivery," "get a baby out that had died inside"(for this baby could no longer do his part), "prevent the poison of the fire from burning the mother," and give other special help. That this magic was the crucial difference between the professional and non-professional was illustrated by the old lady who had delivered 30 babies, but vehemently[67] denied being a midwife. "I am not a professional. I have no magic. I only pray to the Lord Buddha and think of sacred things each time."

759 787 A professional also had more detailed astrological knowledge of the orientations of relevant celestial beings so that delivery would be "helped and not obstructed." This knowledge was in no way a professional secret, but if complications during childbirth were evident, it was necessary to have accuracy, and convenient that the midwife had it.

759 • 562 212 191 778 To certain villagers the designation "professional" could not be applied to women because, never having been ordained, they had not learned to read, as men supposedly had, not only Thai but Pali and Cambodian, the languages of medical and magical lore. "A professional midwife has a book. No woman can become professional because she cannot read." The idea was that incantations were correct only if taken from the sacred texts at the temple, though in fact the formulae were taught orally. One male midwife had a sacred book in his private possession, which was proper, for

sacred books were inherited by males.

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67. Her vehemence may reflect either pride in being so successful without magic--a true liang dī--fear of being reported as unlicensed (see below, p. 145); or consternation lest she be accused of using magic to which she was not entitled.

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sacred books were inherited by males.

In the light of this definition, only the 2 or 3 males were true professional midwives. They gave elaborate annual ceremonies of homage to their teachers (wai khrū) attended by all the persons who had profited from the teacher's magic that year. However, all the male midwives were also fully qualified mō. Their ceremonies were large because they were dedicated to the teachers of their curing powers as well as midwifery.

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The male midwives, then, were in a somewhat different category than the females. They were mō who had, in addition, trained their hands for midwifery as an "extra specialty." Midwifery seems to have been one of the few areas where skilled hands were considered of greater importance than magic. "We have no magic for delivery," said one male midwife, knowing that nothing but merit could guarantee success. Because they had access to the incantations for element and spirit control, and could make holy water, the midwife-mō could spare the parturient the necessity of getting in an outside mō, if such were needed. However, one part of the midwife's job the men could not do. To protect their male powers of invulnerability they were forbidden to wash the woman's clothing. A woman or a female midwife always had to do this. Men also could not provide the female "mystique" particularly related to the khwan and to growth.

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However, the community did not adhere to this narrow definition of professionalism, for several of the experienced and competent women, Buddhist and Muslim, behaved as professionals and were accorded the title of mō tamyan. Their magical formulae, being congruent with their female office of promoters of growth and life, were especially effective. Like a mō they received the ritual gift of the khwan khao, hallmark of the possession of occult formulae, which the patient presented to assure the benefits of magical knowledge.[68]

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68. This ritual bowl of rice and offerings was never excused even between the closest kin. If forgotten or misused, the "teacher" punished the midwife with pains, and had to be mollified with a food offering. The magical benefits could not be withheld once the khwan khao had been accepted. It was not accepted if the patient were too near death to be assisted. If the patient died, the whole gift, cash, rice, and all, was given at once to the temple to make merit.

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759 [465] Although as to fees, they said, "It is as you please," these women received as a rule the higher honoraria of 10, 20, and 30 baht. They did not have a separate teacher-rite but paid their respects during regular temple events, such as offering a pig's head and the other items during someone's ordination, though the Muslim midwife had her modified teacher-rite in a separate home ceremony, not at the mosque (cf. [212] [214] Appendix:Muslim Customs). It was even said of the best female midwife that "she had a book." She was literate in Thai. Even if her book were a popular astrological guide, it carried the reverence accorded all books. Whatever it was, its possession increased her aura of reliability. [789] Though the women did not receive their magic at the temple but rather from a kinsman in the maternal line, their incantations, which appeared to be in the Pali-Thai tradition, were no less effective.

759 The professional midwives, both men and women, saw themselves as individual custodians of sacred knowledge and competent in a technique. They were not only interested and ready, but obligated to give expert care to anyone, anywhere it was needed.

The non-professional midwives always thought of themselves as voluntary helpers of kinsmen, acting "out of pity" and carrying on their female responsibility for new life as older women helping their younger relatives. [562] The idea of giving nurture and assistance was so deeply ingrained in the female office that the professional midwives saw themselves fundamentally as volunteers.

Learning Midwifery

The decision to deliver a daughter or a wife was not momentous. One did not have to be "suk" to deliver a baby. The same practical and compassionate motives that led a mother or husband to do this led some of these people to seek out professional techniques so that they might "help more." One woman, bearing her own child at 25 with intense suffering, became angry (chap chai) because "the midwife did nothing to help, but just sat and chewed betel while others did all the work." In desperation she called in her own mother to deliver her. She also "felt she had many relatives who would need her help." Another was asked by her mother's brother, a midwife, to accompany him as he was getting too old. He then gave her his magic. A man took up the specialty after his first child, a son, died at birth from ineptness, he thought, of the midwife. Another man, though, took it up as a "minor extra" to his career as a mo. All learned the skill by accompanying and helping an

the slight differences in ministrations. "The Muslim midwife massages more than the Buddhist." The women easily entered into reciprocal courtesies. The Muslim woman knew the steps in the Buddhist winnowing ceremony and performed them as desired. One Buddhist m[illegible] dispensed, however, with the winnowing "because the m[illegible]wife was Muslim." A Buddhist woman made up the khwan khăo in the fashion specified by the Muslim midwife and participated in the latter's teacher-rite.

Certain fundamental ideas of the Muslims led to reinterpretations of familiar Buddhist terms and activities. "Khwan" referred to the soul, but with no implication of reincarnation. "Bun," meaning "merit" to the Buddhist, meant charitable giving in the sense of tithes, for Islam prescribed that a portion of one's income be given to the poor. On the other hand, the Muslims had taken over many Buddhist practices for one, the acceptance of Buddhist holy water as a cure for spirit attack.

Completely Muslim was the stress on physical and moral purification as an objective of every rite, and conversely, the prevalence of the idea of defilement. "Circumcision is to cleanse the body before growing up," it was said. Muslim mortuary rites were elaborate procedures for purification. When a Muslim baby died, the Buddhist midwife said, "The body was cleaned before burial," implying thorough measures beyond his ordinary experience. Procreation was viewed as dangerous and contaminating. The behavior that hid sexual phenomena at the same time by constant prescriptions kept sexuality much more in mind. Muslims separated males from females, for example, at feasts. No Muslim male ever became a midwife.

The events surrounding childbirth illustrated the differing viewpoints between Muslim and Buddhist. In the seventh month of her pregnancy, a Muslim woman called on on her chosen midwife, and gave her a gift of betel pepper leaves and areca nut to assure her services (fāk thong: to deposit gold). On returning home, she went as fast as possible "to insure fast delivery." Since Muslims frowned on liquor, their medicines were made up of hot-tasting spices in hot water. Yet one Muslim midwife prescribed large doses of liquor before and during parturition. For labor and delivery, a Muslim was stricter about utilizing the privacy of the small enclosed room, if there were one, while in the Buddhist household "it could be anywhere" in the house. Muslim men, except for husband, brother, or father, were excluded from the scene. The Muslim khwan khăo contained "7

252 a woman's" (Sharp et al., 1953, p. 88). For instance, the
462 husband cooked when his wife was away from home, e.g. selling in the market or in farm labor, and of course when she was
252 sick or resting after childbirth. The ability of boys as well
867 as girls to cook rice and some of the accompaniments was taken for granted. A girl or boy could cook rice "as soon as he could lift the rice pot," e.g. at 6 or so; by age 12 he could cook a creditable meal. In mid-December, 1952, on the last day of school before vacation, one of us saw committees of school children (aged 7-14 years) preparing food for a special meal, on the school grounds. The variety of dishes prepared and the ease with which the children went about their tasks gave evidence of the home experience these children had had
252 (Hauck, 1953). Responsibility for food preparation increased
383 with age up to about 15 years, after which all available able-bodied family members did field work during the busy seasons (cf. p. 11). Several hours per day were spent in cooking and by middle age, parents were eager to turn this job over to a
597 daughter or daughter-in-law. If they had no daughter, this was an explicit reason for adopting a baby girl.

252 Certain men of eminence, e.g. headmen and elders, would
554 not be asked to cook at all, but as they aged, they might re-
881 turn to the task. One old headman, all of whose children had married and left home, said that he was doing the cooking for
252 2 months because his wife had back trouble. Some dishes were
562 cooked by men only, even when their wives stood by: turtle, frog and cobra curries, for instance. These were also food for men only, suitable to serve at a drinking party.

252 A premium was put on good cooking, and certain women
861 who were noted for their cooking were in great demand for large
868 scale food preparation during the ceremonial season. One farmer planned to send his daughter to learn from such a skilled cook, having in mind the food preparation which would be needed when his sons were old enough to be ordained. Adverse comments might be made if the food did not come up to expectation; thus, a small boy complained that his curry was "too salty," and an old woman said loudly that the curry made by her 16-year old grand-daughter was "not good," although this girl was the only one at home to cook.

Meal Patterns[1] and Preparation of Typical Thai Dishes

252 Food was commonly prepared twice a day, in the morning
264 and late afternoon. The meal pattern was the same for breakfast

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114 1. Suvarnakich (1950) described the Thai diet in a
262 general way and Sharp et al., (1953, pp. 263-274) summarized the small amount of information on diet in Bang Chan obtained during the preliminary study in 1948-49.

would not come willingly to work. When a family with a reputation for stinginess diluted the (3)khaaw (3)tom too much, the group refused to eat any, thereby reminding the host of his obligation for hospitality.

Guests to whom meals were served fell into four categories: 1) kin, 2) visiting dignitaries, 3) priests and 4) drinking companions. Kinfolk who came as guests were married children, or those who were away at school or work, or kinsmen from Bangkok or elsewhere. The older the relative or the greater the distance travelled, the greater the honor accorded him. Foods were exchanged. Two visiting ladies travelling in a large boat, made an annual round of all their relatives, bringing certain "city" foods and receiving substantial gifts of rice, fish and fruit. They stayed for several days as guests of one family, then moved on. Every person from Bang Chan who visited a relative in Bangkok carried big packages of food, usually rice or eggs, as gifts. With the inflated prices in Bangkok, it was advantageous to have a "country cousin" who might bring food. Visiting kinsmen always recognized the need for eventual reciprocity.

Visiting dignitaries were usually entertained by hamlet headmen. Meals served to visiting officials, policemen and others might be elaborate, involving cooperative help in preparation, but reciprocity, if any, rarely took the form of a return meal.

Regular visits of the priests, as well as the invitation of priests to the house for special events, have been mentioned. Priests might also come from afar, usually staying at the temple but receiving generous offerings of food from people of the community.

The custom of convivial get-togethers of either or both sexes was well established. Men traditionally enjoyed "stag" dinners of four up to twenty or more whenever the ingredients for a turtle, frog, cobra or other snake curry were available. Chicken curry might also be thus served, and once a catfish mash was prepared by a male visitor from the north. Those curries were cooked by men, and the host served liquor freely. The all-male character of the occasion reflected the old restrictions on women's partaking of flesh foods (see p. 42), but older women did not hesitate to join in the drinking. Women also got together in drinking parties, sometimes to play cards.

In addition to sharing food with people in these four categories, the general rules of hospitality required that anyone who came to the house at meal time, should be offered food, or at least a drink of liquor, tea, or plain water.

262 883 understood that her merit helped her not to be hungry. Once she asked an eminent layman about eating at night. He said, "If you are not hungry, do not eat. If you feel hungry, it is better to eat. If someone invites you to eat, it is sinful to refuse."

261 Even young adults had a strong revulsion against gluttony. One of the symptoms of a man who went mad and had to be committed to an institution was that "he ate too much." A woman was despised because "she ate in secret. She stole eggs from her husband, sold them in the market, and then spent the cash on food which she ate there, instead of bringing it home." Definitions of a glutton were: "A 'with-rice' eater," or simply as "one who eats alone." These comments highlight the counsels of eating in moderation and in company. On the other hand, a full stomach was valued for "home is where one eats one's fill."

262 562 262 220 At maturity, when farm and other tasks were shared as equals, men and women ate almost the same food. The old proscription against animal food for women was somewhat relaxed, but not entirely. To sustain farmers during the seasons of hard work, however, extra quantities of rice and rice alone, were considered essential. "With-rice" was pleasant but not so necessary. Any shift away from a diet of rice as ordinarily cooked in Bang Chan was construed as a shift either in occupation or in health. For example an eminent citizen who gave up farming took to eating (3)khaaw (3)tom often. This soupy [253] rice, a staple dish for infant feeding, had interesting socio-economic connotations. It was served as a light lunch to cooperative farm-workers to be followed at the day's end by a real meal. It was also "delicate" food, suitable for the sick, for city-people, for those who did not toil with their hands and backs. Consequently, when this man ate this "delicate food" more often, he was consciously or unconsciously serving notice on the community that he was not going to do farm work any more, for (3)khaaw (3)tom could not possibly have sustained a farmer's strength. Caustic villagers hinted that he was putting on airs.

262 843 846 Among conditions in which some change from the usual diet was found were pregnancy, post parturition and lactation. Relatively few foods were generally considered to be tabooed under any of these conditions, but many women preferred to limit intake to "safe" foods if there were any possibility that certain foods might cause harm.

[124] Information was obtained from 42 mothers about the food they ate during the post-partum rest period. Two said they ate as usual, but for the remainder, the diet was considerably

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[192] 1. Literally "beautiful rice." For method of cooking, see p. 33.

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bang Chan

since there is always sufficient fish in the canal for an abandoned spouse to feed himself,[23] the departure of a wife or husband need not, from a functional point of view and the point of view of most villagers, work any great hardship on the individuals involved. This suggests that not all social systems are equally demanding in their functional requirements for people to conform. The importance of this point is taken up in the final chapter.

It is recognized, of course, that the sociological simplicity of Bang Chan represents a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for the nonconformity found in the community. There undoubtedly are many cultures which are functionally and sociologically less complex than Bang Chan but where culturally defined requirements for interpersonal conformity are considerably greater. I would suggest that the loosely structured nature of relationships in Bang Chan is due primarily to psychological and philosophical ("world view") factors and is *permitted* expression by the relatively undifferentiated social system. A more complex, highly differentiated social system, one whose functioning is completely dependent on the technical competencies of its members and on their meeting each other's expectations (a factory system, for example) obviously could not afford this luxury.

It might be noted that, in the example cited earlier regarding the movie-going field assistants, one of the reasons for my consternation (over and above my being an American) was the fact that these persons were highly trained individuals who could not be easily replaced. Their temporary departures were strain enough; had the departures been permanent, it would at that point have paralyzed the research. In this respect, their behavior was typically Thai, but the situation in which they found themselves was not.[24]

The ultimate psychological sources of the villagers' tendency toward loosely structured relationships are not easily determined. (The indeterminacy here is inevitable. It derives from the impossibility of ever being certain whether the loose relationships are actually consequences or causes of these other factors, or whether both are expressions of a single, under-

[23] This is just what one informant, a female, said when her husband left her. The sociological simplicity of Bang Chan is also supported by the slight differentiation that villagers make between the adult roles of the two sexes. In contrast to all other known cultures, in Thailand both men and women may serve as midwives and do plowing. They both own and operate farms, inherit property equally, share equally in the property brought to a marriage and divide it equally in case of divorce. It is not uncommon to find men tending babies while women are off on a business deal; nor is it unusual, as indicated earlier, to see women paddling right along with men as crew members in a boat race. (See Sharp *et al.* 1953 for an amplification of this point.)

[24] In fact, this event is a perfect illustration in microcosm of what was referred to in the introduction, following Inkeles and Levinson, as "personality-institutional noncongruence."

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bang Chan

114 villagers of Bang Chan. Although in their eyes he probably never ceased being identified in some ways with the *farang*, he was defined primarily as "one of us." He helped reinforce this definition by referring to himself and the villagers as "we Thai" or "we Thai farmers," as contrasted with the *farang*. Often, not out of any enmity but simply because he had a ready foil, he would make fun of my *farang* ways for the benefit of the villagers. It was conduct like this, repeatedly expressed, that permitted him later to ask the villagers their opinions of the *farang* without raising any eyebrows. On the other hand, when the need arose, he readily assumed the role of the gentle, guiding, probing representative of the research who, in his efforts to get the villagers to participate, would appeal to everything from pride in country ("Don't you want the *farang* to know the true way we Thai people think") to the principle of reciprocity ("We do a favor for *Aacaan* Herb by helping him pass his examination, and he helps us by bringing us fame").

The two female graduate students who worked part-time were not as distinctive as their male counterpart, but in their own way, were equally as effective in the research. One was the daughter of a high-ranking Army Officer School teacher; the other was the daughter of a low-level bureaucrat. In their early twenties, they had been closest friends during college and graduate studies. To a certain extent, they were prototypes of the upper-middle-class, college educated Thai female.[3] Confident about their 114 • 562 579 professional abilities and aware of how much they are needed, they are caught in the conflict of whether to participate in "worldly affairs" and thus become independent and admired social leaders, or to become wives and mothers, and thus live in the shadows of their husbands. Their problem, unlike the case in the United States, is that both alternatives are equally valued and equally available and that because the social need is so great, they can actually become leaders with not too much effort. The conflict is further aggravated by the fact that they come from the social class that emphasizes a double sexual standard. At the same time as they are expected to be assertive and competent in their jobs, they are also expected to be sweet, docile, and compliant females. They resolve this conflict to a large

[159] [3] The daughter of the lower-level bureaucrat had this status by virtue of her own accomplishment, not her father's. In fact, one of the most touching scenes I ever observed in Thailand was when the girl's entire family assembled at Don Muang Airport to see her off to the United States where she had won a graduate fellowship. She had become the hope and pride of her family. Her mother, in the traditional cropped hair style of the Thai female and her mouth stained with betel juice, was trying to stand on the pair of oversized high heels that she had bought especially for the occasion. Tears were flowing down her eyes, both in pride over her daughter and because she could hardly walk on her first pair of "modern" shoes. My male assistant, in his inimitable way, turned to me and whispered: "Khun Maeae [the honored mother] wants to be just like her successful daughter."

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bang Chan

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extent by becoming succoring females—taking care of the less fortunate, seeking opportunities where they can help others, and the like.

The relevance of these remarks to the work of the assistants in Bang Chan is that they represent the attitudes the girls brought into play in their relationships with the villagers. In the eyes of Bang Chaners, they were well-educated, high status city girls who combined the finest qualities of the Thai woman. They were not only clever because they carried clipboards and spoke two languages but they were "good" girls who used "sweet words" and proper terms of address and "brought us medicine when we were ill. They knew how to help farmers." In contrast to my own practice—which was to give villagers aspirin only if they explicitly asked for help, or if the problem was more serious to plead incompetence—their actions were entirely spontaneous. In the same way, villagers would often wonder why after working all week at the university, these girls would spend their Sundays and holidays in Bang Chan. The answer was not hard for them to find: "These girls have much progress. They want to help the nation and themselves. So they come here and work for *Aacaan* Herb. This will help them go to America. And then they will have more progress." Although this motive may have entered into the assistants' decisions, a more important reason was the simple pleasure they derived from listening to villagers bare their problems and preoccupations. By giving of their time and interest they were fulfilling their own best image of themselves.

[123]

A final word should be said about the various relationships existing among the assistants and myself. The relationships that developed among the assistants themselves was perhaps the ideal Thai adjustment to the unique situation in which these three young, unmarried people found themselves: they began to treat each other like brothers and sisters. Theirs was not a perfect sibling relationship—not even in the fictive sense, for they were keenly aware of their differences in background and of the desirability of keeping romantic considerations out of the relationship. However, their very differences in background helped form a bond of mutual respect.

Their attitudes toward the author were more complicated. Although in many ways they treated me too as a sibling, their attitudes were forever colored by the fact that I was a *farang*. On the positive side, this meant that they respected me for my technical training and knowledge, and for my obvious concern about learning as much as I could about the villagers. By the same token, however, they would frequently become annoyed by my inability to see things which in Thai terms were obvious, or by my insistence on probing matters that in their terms were either unanswerable or better left unexamined. Their attitudes toward me were not too different

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as apt to adopt the motor irrespective of whether he has been in contact with urban culture.

TABLE 20. ILLITERATE FARMERS* WITH WIDER CULTURE CONTACTS ARE MORE LIKELY THAN OTHERS TO USE THE MOTOR

	Illiterate (Proportion using the motor)		Literate (Proportion using the motor)	
Trips to the airport				
None	38%	(40)	86%	(35)
One or more	63	(49)	86	(83)
Visits to the agricultural fair				
None	50%	(67)	85%	(76)
One or more	57	(24)	88	(43)

*Male farmers only

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However, no such relationship was discerned between these culture contacts and trying out either fertiliser, tilapia, or mushrooms.

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Here again, is evidence to support the hypothesis that contacts with urban culture may act as a substitute for literacy in making the farmer more sophisticated about improving his standard of living and level of production. But the data show that such exposure need not result from direct physical contact with urban centers; it can, instead, be a result of indirect contact. Direct physical contact with urban culture, it turns out, is effective in increasing the incidence of acceptance of the more complex innovations only for the illiterate farmers of Bang Chan.

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Friendships

The same reasoning which would lead one to expect a higher incidence of acceptance of innovations among those directly exposed to urban contacts would lead to the companion hypothesis: that inhabitants who have a greater degree of internal contacts with their friends and neighbors might tend to try out innovations to a greater extent than those who remain relatively aloof from such social contacts.

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The data show that such contacts have a limited connection with acceptance of innovations. The incidence of motor use and tilapia raising is higher, it is true, among persons who report a wider sphere of social circulation; but there is little relation between social contacts and willingness to try out fertiliser or mushrooms.

admit in response to a direct question* that they have a debt. Confidence in the validity of these responses as an index of indebtedness is increased since the expected correlation between indebtedness and ownership of buffalo is reflected in the survey data.

TABLE 23. INCIDENCE OF REPORTED DEBT IS HIGHER AMONG VILLAGERS WHO REPORT OWNERSHIP OF MORE BUFFALOES

	Reported Ownership of Buffaloes		
	None (81)	One to three (153)	Four or more (97)
"...Do you now have a debt?			
Yes	49%	56%	69%
No	51	44	31

When the use of agricultural innovations is examined for those farmers who say they have a debt, compared with those who deny it, it becomes apparent that there is a relationship only between indebtedness and use of the motor but not with any of the other mentioned innovations. Seventy-nine per cent of the male farmers who said they have a debt own or use the motor; among those who claim they have no debt the proportion owning or using the motor is significantly less (60 per cent).

TABLE 24. INCIDENCE OF MOTOR USE IS HIGHER AMONG FARMERS WHO REPORT INDEBTEDNESS

	"...Do you now have a debt: "Yes (125)	"...Do you now have a debt: "No (105)
Motor		
Has used it	79%	60%
Never did	21	40
Tilapia		
Has tried it	37%	33%
Never did	63	67
Fertilizer		
Has used it	14%	16%
Never did	86	84
Mushrooms		
Has tried them	45%	48%
Never did	55	52

**Male farmers only

* The question: "...I'd like to ask about a problem common in rural places all over the world. Do you now have a debt or not?" Janlekha's M.S. thesis, ibid., reports a similar distribution of indebtedness for his sample of 96 farmers.

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TABLE 26. INCIDENCE OF HOSPITAL AND CLINIC VISITS IS SIMILAR FOR ALL AGE GROUPS

Have you ever been to a clinic or a hospital?	20-29 (41)	30-39 (80)	40-49 (85)	50-59 (60)	60 or over (57)
No, never	31%	31%	36%	37%	41%
Yes, for treatment	39	44	39	31	31
Yes, for other reasons	29	25	25	32	28

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If the responses reflect primarily the need for medical care, women who bear children have a greater need for medical care than men, and one would therefore expect hospital use to be higher among women than men. But again, this hunch is not clearly borne out by the results.

TABLE 27. INCIDENCE OF HOSPITAL AND CLINIC USE IS SIMILAR FOR MEN AND WOMEN

Have you ever been to a clinic or a hospital?	Women (90)	Men (243)
No, never	41%	35%
Yes, for treatment	31	39
Yes, for other reasons	28	26

There is, then, reasonable justification for inferring that reported use of clinics or hospitals reflects predisposition to use modern health facilities and not simply a need for medical care.

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Economic Level

Although higher economic level was linked to the principal agricultural innovations, it is not related to use of hospital or clinic facilities.

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Literacy

On the other hand, just as literate persons were more disposed to use the major innovations (p. 19), in the same way those who can read and write report a greater incidence of hospital or clinic use.